

Listing of Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the subject application:

1. (original) A medical image diagnosing support apparatus comprising:

a first extraction means which extracts a body region of a subject from a tomographic image of the subject acquired by a medical tomographic apparatus;

a second extraction means which extracts a non-adipose region from the body region;

a third extraction means which extracts a total body adipose region from the body region;

a separation means which separates the total body adipose region into a visceral adipose region and a subcutaneous adipose region based on positional information of the non-adipose region; and

a display control means which controls of displaying the tomographic image on an image display device with clear indication of the visceral adipose region and the subcutaneous adipose region.

2. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second extraction means extracts the non-adipose region by performing threshold processing of a pixel value in the tomographic image.

3. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 2,

wherein the second extraction means sequentially searches for a pixel value range usually provided by the non-adipose region, and sets a threshold range of the threshold processing based on the most frequent pixel value in the pixel value range.

4. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second extraction means performs peripheral edge recognition processing of the non-adipose region, sets a plurality of attention points on a recognized peripheral edge, and interpolates spaces between the plurality of attention points by higher order spline interpolation to extract an outline of the non-adipose region.

5. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an epidermal tissue layer removal means which removes an epidermal tissue layer in the non-adipose region,

wherein the third extraction means extracts the total body adipose region from the body region from which the epidermal tissue layer is removed by the epidermal tissue layer removal means.

6. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the third extraction means extracts the total body adipose region by subtracting the non-adipose region from the body region.

7. (currently amended) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to

~~one of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 6~~, further comprising a determination means which determines whether the tomographic image is suitable for body adipose measurement,

wherein the display control means controls to display a determination result by the determination means on the image display device.

8. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 7, wherein when the determination means obtains error information that the tomographic image is not obtained from a site suitable for body adipose measurement of the subject or not acquired by a predetermined medical tomographic apparatus, the display control means controls to display the error information on the image display device.

9. (currently amended) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 8~~, further comprising an area ratio calculation means which calculates area ratios of the total body adipose region, the visceral adipose region, and the subcutaneous adipose region,

wherein the display control means controls to display the area ratios calculated by the area ratio calculation means on the image display device.

10. (original) The medical image diagnosing support apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising a print output means which prints and outputs the tomographic image and the area ratios controlled to be displayed on the image display device by the display control means.

11. (original) A medical image diagnosing support method comprising:

- a first extraction step of extracting a body region of a subject from a tomographic image of the subject acquired by a medical tomographic apparatus;
- a second extraction step of extracting a non-adipose region from the body region;
- a third extraction step of extracting a total body adipose region from the body region;
- a separation step of separating the total adipose region into a visceral adipose region and a subcutaneous adipose region based on positional information of the non-adipose region;

and

- a display control step of controlling of displaying the tomographic image on an image display device with clear indication of the visceral adipose region and the subcutaneous adipose region.

12. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 11, wherein threshold processing of a pixel value is performed in the tomographic image to extract the non-adipose region in the second extraction step.

13. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 12, wherein a pixel value range usually provided by the non-adipose region is sequentially searched for, and a threshold range of the threshold processing is set based on the most frequent pixel value in the pixel value range in the second extraction step.

14. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 12, wherein peripheral edge recognition processing of the non-adipose region is performed, a plurality of attention points are set on a recognized peripheral edge, and spaces between the plurality of attention points are interpolated by higher order spline interpolation to extract an outline of the non-adipose region in the second extraction step.

15. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 11, further comprising an epidermal tissue layer removal step of removing an epidermal tissue layer in the non-adipose region,

wherein the total body adipose region are extracted from the body region from which the epidermal tissue layer is removed by the epidermal tissue layer removal means in the third extraction step.

16. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 11, wherein in the third extraction step, the total body adipose region are extracted by subtracting the non-adipose region from the body region.

17. (currently amended) The medical image diagnosing support method according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 11 ~~to 16~~, further comprising a determination step of determining whether the tomographic image is suitable for body adipose measurement,

wherein a determination result by the determination step is controlled to be displayed on the image display device in the display control step.

18. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 17, wherein when error information that the tomographic image is not obtained from a site suitable for body adipose measurement of the subject or not acquired by a predetermined medical tomographic apparatus is obtained in the determination step, the error information is controlled to be displayed on the image display device in the display control step.

19. (currently amended) The medical image diagnosing support method according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 11 ~~to 18~~, further comprising an area ratio calculation step of calculating area ratios of the total body adipose region, the visceral adipose region, and the subcutaneous adipose region,

wherein the area ratios calculated by the area ratio calculation means are controlled to be displayed on the image display device in the display control step.

20. (original) The medical image diagnosing support method according to claim 19, further comprising a print output step of printing and outputting the tomographic image and the area ratios controlled to be displayed on the image display device in the display control step.